

Appl. No. : 10/826,219
Filed : April 16, 2004

REMARKS

Claims 1-67 were pending prior to the amendments herein. Claims 5, 6, 9, 16, 17, 20, 45, 46, 49, and 55-57 are amended herein. Claims 1-4, 8, 12-15, 19, 24-44, 48, and 58-61 have been canceled without prejudice. Applicants expressly reserve the right to pursue the canceled claims in one or more continuation applications. New Claims 68-70 have been added. Claims 5-7, 9-11, 16-18, 20-23, 45-47, 49-57, and 62-70 are therefore pending.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants note with appreciation that Claims 62-67 are allowed and that Claim 9-11, 20-23, and 49-54 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Claim Amendments

Applicants have amended Claim 9 to include all the limitations of base Claims 1, 2, 3, and 8, thereby placing Claim 9 and Claims 10 and 11, which depend from Claim 9, in condition for allowance.

Applicants have amended Claim 20 to include all the limitations of base Claims 1, 2, 14, and 19, thereby placing Claim 20 and Claims 21-23, which depend from Claim 20, in condition for allowance.

Applicants have amended Claim 49 to include all the limitations of base Claims 42, 43, and 48, thereby placing Claim 49 and Claims 50-54, which depend from Claim 49, in condition for allowance.

Applicants have amended Claims 5, 6, 16, 17, 45, 46, and 55-57 to depend from an allowed base claim. Thus, amended Claims 5, 6, 16, 17, 45, 46, and 55-57 are also believed to be in condition for allowance.

Response to Invocation of 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶ 6

The Office Action states that Claims 40 and 41 are not in proper means-plus-function format under 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶ 6. The characterization is moot in light of the cancellation of Claims 40 and 41.

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Response to Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 & 103

Claims 1-8, 25-41, and 58-61 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,143,155 to Adams et al. Claims 1, 12, 13, 37, and 42 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,251,235 to Talieh et al.

Claims 12-19, 42-48, 56, and 57 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Adams in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,106,680 to Nogami et al. Claim 24 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Adams in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,299,741 to Sun et al. Claim 55 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Adams in view of Nogami and further in view of Sun.

Claims 1-4, 8, 12-15, 19, 24-44, 48, and 58-61

The rejections of Claims 1-4, 8, 12-15, 19, 24-44, 48, and 58-61 are moot in light of the cancellation of those claims. Moreover, Applicants do not acquiesce to the Examiner's interpretation of the canceled claims or elements recited therein.

Claims 5-7, 16-18, 45-47, and 55-57

As described above, Claims 9, 20, and 49 are allowable and have been rewritten in independent form. Claims 5-7 depend from rewritten Claim 9. Thus, Claims 5-7 include all of the features of Claim 9 and recite unique combinations of additional features not taught or suggested by the cited references. Claims 16-18 depend from rewritten Claim 20. Thus, Claims 16-18 include all of the features of Claim 20 and recite unique combinations of additional features not taught or suggested by the cited references. Claims 45-47 and 55-57 depend from rewritten Claim 49. Thus, Claims 45-57 and 55-57 include all of the features of Claim 49 and recite unique combinations of additional features not taught or suggested by the cited references. Therefore, Applicants submit that the rejections of Claims 5-7, 16-18, 45-47, and 55-57 are overcome.

New Claims

Claims 68-70 have been added and are fully supported by the application as originally filed. For example, see ¶ [0030] and Fig. 3 of the published application. Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 68-70, which depend from, and include all the features of, Claims 10, 22, and

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51, respectively, which are allowable as discussed above, are also allowable. Furthermore, each of the new dependent claims recites further distinguishing features of particular utility.

Summary

Applicants respectfully submit that all of the pending claims are allowable. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejections and pass Claims 5-7, 9-11, 16-18, 20-23, 45-47, 49-57, and 62-70 to allowance.

Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410.

Respectfully submitted,

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